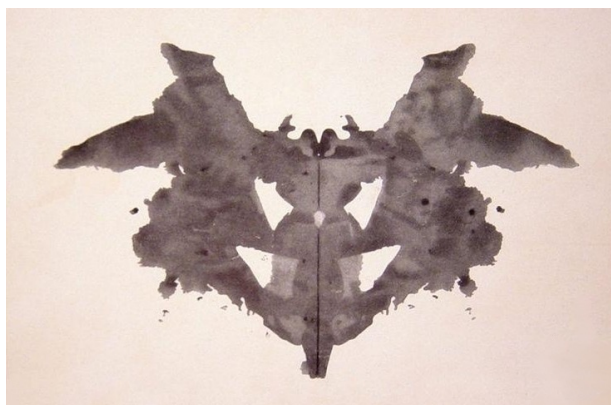


The Rorschach Test

The Rorschach test, also known as the Rorschach inkblot test, the Rorschach technique, or simply the inkblot test, is a psychological test in which subjects' perceptions of inkblots are recorded and then analysed using psychological interpretation, complex algorithms, or both. Some psychologists use this test to examine a person's personality characteristics and emotional functioning, especially in cases where patients are reluctant to describe their thinking processes openly. The test is named after its creator, Swiss psychologist Hermann Rorschach.



Example of a Rorschach inkblot test

Using interpretation of "ambiguous designs" to assess an individual's personality is an idea that goes back to Leonardo da Vinci and Botticelli. Rorschach's test, however, was the first systematic approach of this kind. The subject, or person taking the test, is shown a set of inkblot images, and his or her responses are recorded and interpreted by the psychologist. The underlying assumption is that an individual will class external stimuli based on person-specific needs, motives and conflicts.

It has been suggested that Rorschach's use of inkblots may have been inspired by German doctor Justinus Kerner who, in 1857, had published a popular book of poems, each of which was inspired by an accidental inkblot. French psychologist Alfred Binet had also experimented with inkblots as a creativity test, and, after the turn of the century, psychological experiments where inkblots were utilised multiplied, with aims such as studying imagination and consciousness.

In fact, Rorschach never intended the inkblots to be used as a general personality test, but developed them as a tool for the diagnosis of schizophrenia. It was not until 1939 that the test was used as a projective test of personality, a use of which Rorschach had always been skeptical.

Use the passage on the previous page to complete the exercise below.

Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct sentence endings from the box below.

- 1) The Rorschach test is often used by psychologists to
- 2) The test is based on the belief that people will
- 3) Rorschach's original aim was not to assess personality, but to

- A) test people's creativity.
- B) interpret ambiguous images according to their own specific perceptions of life.
- C) diagnose a mental disorder.
- D) assess subjects who are unwilling to express their thoughts.

(Correct answers are on the next page)

Correct answers:

1. D
2. B
3. C